

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 14, 2007 – 4:00pm

Cultural Arts Center – 200 N. Davie Street

PRESENT: Paul Brown, Marc Bush (arrived 4:15), Robert Douglas, III, Ken Free, Lori Galbreath (dismissed 5:00), David Hoggard (arrived 4:32), Rose Marie Ponton, Judi Rossabi, Randy Scott

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Candice Bruton, Kathy Cates, John Hughes, Bonnie Kuester (arrived 4:43), Patrice Matier (intern), Mary Alice Kurr-Murphy, Dan Maxson, Brooks Mullane, Lane Newsome, Darious Oliver, Tom Ravenel, Marcie Richardson, Deborah Scales, Laurie Thore, Heather Ulrich, Mary Vigue (Budget & Evaluation), Richard Wagner, Bernadette White, Chris Wilson

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held at the Cultural Arts Center. Robert Douglas, III, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 13, 2006 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Recognition

On behalf of Bonnie Kuester, Dan Maxson, Division Manager, recognized the Parks and Recreation December Employee of the Month, Lane Newsome, January Employee of the Month, Heather Ulrich, and February Employee of the Month, Tom Ravenel.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget and Fee Schedule Update

Dan Maxson, Division Manager stated that Bonnie Kuester is attending a Department Head retreat discussing the City of Greensboro Budget. As previously reported in the News & Record, the City Manager wants to present to City Council a no tax increase budget. This discussion started as result of the City Council retreat and has changed direction on many items for Parks and Recreation and how to proceed through the upcoming budget preparation process. Department Heads are meeting today to discuss how the organization can be more efficient and effective but at the same time continue to provide quality services to the citizens of Greensboro.

Maxson stated that in December he presented to the Commission proposed Parks and Recreation fees for the upcoming spring and fiscal year. Due to new discussions taking place regarding the budget, staff and city management felt the need to re-visit the fee schedule that was previously presented to the Commission. Parks and Recreation is currently reviewing the fee schedule to see if areas can address fee increases. A portion of the Manager's direction made to Department Heads is to look at a 2 ½ % decrease in our maintenance and operations budget for the upcoming year but to also look at what increases could be put in place to offset reductions in our maintenance and operations budget. An update will be given at the March Commission meeting.

Rose Marie Ponton, Commissioner, stated that the public should be informed that Guilford County is paying a differential fee for Guilford County residents who utilize Greensboro facilities, programs, etc.

Maxson stated that the Budget and Evaluation Department conducted a fee study a few years ago that made recommendations for a substantial increase in fees for non City of Greensboro residents who are participants in Greensboro programs. This seems to be working well with Guilford County as they pay the differential fee for that participant. This has improved the already strong relationship with Guilford County.

Douglas added that for clarification the Center City Park maintenance is funded by the Mayor's discretionary budget and not the Parks and Recreation budget.

Robert Douglas, III took prerogative of the Chair and stated that the Commission would now hear from the Gateway Garden representatives.

Gateway Garden

Pam Allen, Gateway Garden representative, stated that a new Gateway Garden video has recently been completed. Allen introduced Kathy Cates, Director Greensboro Beautiful, Peg Moore, Chair of Greensboro Beautiful, and then turned the presentation over to David Winslowe. Winslowe then presented the Commission with the new Gateway Garden video.

David stated that Garden gatherings will be held during April 20 – May 24, 2007 as Gateway Garden informative events. A five million dollar (\$5,000,000) campaign kick-off will be held in October 2007 with hopes of completion in December 2007. The City of Greensboro has contributed an initial one and a half million dollars (\$1,500,000) by providing the land. Greensboro Beautiful has contributed one hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$115,000). David stated that Greensboro Beautiful is in the process of talking to the foundation community and receiving a warm reception. Greensboro Beautiful will be approaching the Convention Visitors Bureau and the general assembly. Naming opportunities are available beginning at one hundred dollars (\$100).

The Gateway Garden video can be viewed on Greensboro's Channel 13 and the City of Greensboro website.

Paul Brown, Commissioner, recommended that the video be aired on Public Channel 4.

Rose Marie Ponton commended Greensboro Beautiful and their creditability of this project.

Robert Douglas, III commended Greensboro Beautiful on their efforts with this project and the quality of their presentation.

Fit Community Designation

Candice Bruton, Strategic Planning Administrator, informed the Commission that the City of Greensboro received their Fit Community designation from the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund and Blue Cross and Blue Shield in May 2006. The Fit Community designation ceremony was held this morning, February 14, 2007, and our Fit Community signage was unveiled. The event was hosted by Warnersville Recreation Center. In attendance was Mayor Keith Holiday, Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, Parks and Recreation Commissioners Rose Marie Ponton and Ken Free, and Parks and Recreation staff.

Comments from the Lieutenant Governor and Mayor were made regarding the important role Parks and Recreation has in economic development and the quality of life to the citizens of Greensboro. Also mentioned was the Mayor's Challenge where the Mayor of Greensboro has challenged other Guilford County Mayors to loose ten pounds in ten weeks. All citizens are encouraged to participate.

Rose Marie Ponton added that Blue Cross and Blue Shield are sponsors of Fit Community and that this is the first designation in the state which speaks well for the Parks and Recreation Department.

NEW BUSINESS

Lacrosse

This item was postponed.

Project Management Update

Richard Wagner, Project Specialist, updated the Commission of the following project:

- David Caldwell Visitors Center
 - Funding from private donation
 - Footings were complete in June 2006
 - Block foundation was complete in August 2006
 - Expected completion April 2007
- Leonard Recreation Center Restrooms and Concessions
 - Funding from 2000 Bond Referendum
 - Project complete
- Peeler Recreation Center Restrooms and Picnic Shelter
 - Funding from 2000 Bond Referendum
 - Project complete
- Price Park Butterfly Meadow Kiosk
 - Information kiosk installed
 - Material funded by Piedmont Land Conservancy
 - Construction drawings from Erskine-Smith
 - Labor donated by the Remodelors Council
 - Project complete
- Glenwood Community Garden
 - Partnership with Guilford County Public Health Department and the NC Cooperative Extension
 - Located at Steelman Park along Gregory Street
 - Construction scheduled for March 2007
- Springdale Park
 - Relocation of playground
 - Redesign park access points
 - Installation of pergola and platform
- Sussman Park
 - Redesigning playground
- Barber Park
 - Tree clearing complete
 - Currently in demolition stage

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

- NONE -

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Bonnie Kuester stated that Department Heads have been attending a three day retreat working with the budget consisting of challenges regarding reductions and revenue increases. A group of 5 or 6 Department Heads in each group discussed what is taking place in those departments in terms of how their operation functions, how revenues are generated and how expenses are handled.

Kuester reminded the Commission of the joint City Council / Parks and Recreation Commission meeting Monday, February 19, 2007 at 5:30.

Kuester commended staff on their efforts with the Fit Community designation.

Kuester stated that the Athletic Advisory Board (AAB) has been through a few renditions and is once again addressing another rendition. The initial forming of the AAB was staff appointed, the second was Commissioner appointed with some appointed members unable to attend meetings regularly. In December a focus group of the AAB gathered to discuss concerns that developed last year over baseball. This focus group was very attentive to the issue as well as very interested in the process of athletic events. Due to interest expressed from this focus group and with Commission approval we would like to move forward with a formation of an AAB that is made up of these focus groups individuals including any of the appointees the Commission appointed who want to remain as members.

Action Taken

A motion was made by David Hoggard, and seconded by Randy Scott for the Athletic Advisory Board focus group to address concerns relative to athletics. A vote in favor was unanimous.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Paul Brown distributed News & Record articles pertaining to the member attendance of Board and Commission meetings, the save a tree program, and a non-profit organization buying and holding land for a military park expansion.

Judi Rossabi commended Lane Newsome for being Employee of the Month and his efforts with the Sportsplex and making it a welcoming atmosphere.

Marc Bush commended Greensboro Beautiful and volunteers for their efforts with the Gateway Garden and the location is indeed the Gateway to the City Greensboro. Bush also stated that Greensboro will host the State Games this summer and the Cycle North Carolina event will include a stop a Bur-Mil Park this fall.

Robert Douglas, III informed everyone that the Women's ACC tournament is being held in Greensboro this year.

With no further business Douglas adjourned the meeting at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation